



# Bethany Beyond Jordan

**Pilgrim Center, Baptismal Site  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in  
Jordan and the Holy Land**

*Pilgrimage Retreat Reflection*

“All this happened in Bethany on the east side of the River Jordan” (John 1:28), where Jesus was baptized by John. Together with Bethlehem and Jerusalem this is one of the three most important places in Christianity. It is in this region east of the Jordan River that much of the life of the Old Testament events played out. It is here Elijah was taken to heaven and where the Israelites crossed into Canaan.

From the third century this was a well-known pilgrim place close to Mount Nebo, Jericho, Jerusalem and Bethlehem. Here lived a vibrant community with hermits, churches and monasteries. This is witnessed by the many ruins, caves and of the stories told by pilgrims.

When Jesus was baptized the heaven opened up and a voice was heard:

*“You are my beloved,  
you are my chosen one”*

Also you can experience this; Heaven gets close and a voice is heard “You are my beloved, you are my chosen one.”

*(Matt 3:13-19).*

Bethany Beyond Jordan is a meeting point at the source of Baptism, deepening the experience of God’s love to humanity.

The Pilgrim Center, Bethany Beyond Jordan is a place of worship, meditation, of listening and learning. The focus is on the spiritual and historical, political and environmental aspects of the place. Worship is central, pilgrims and visitors are encouraged to renew their baptismal vows. Thematic pilgrim walks and retreats, baptisms and conferences are organized at the Center. The Pilgrim Center is open to all churches, believers and visitors. It is a place of fellowship and dialogue with all people of good will.

The Pilgrim Center is governed by an international board under the chairmanship of Bishop Ibrahim Azar of the ELCJHL.

At this newly excavated place, land has been given to the local churches by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan as a sign of the appreciation for the role the Christian community plays in building peace in the Middle East.

We have a small guesthouse with two bedrooms and a kitchen/living room. The guesthouse is for pilgrims, guests and retreats. Simplicity and self service is the theme for our guesthouse.



For guided visits and programs contact:

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The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bethany Beyond the Jordan